

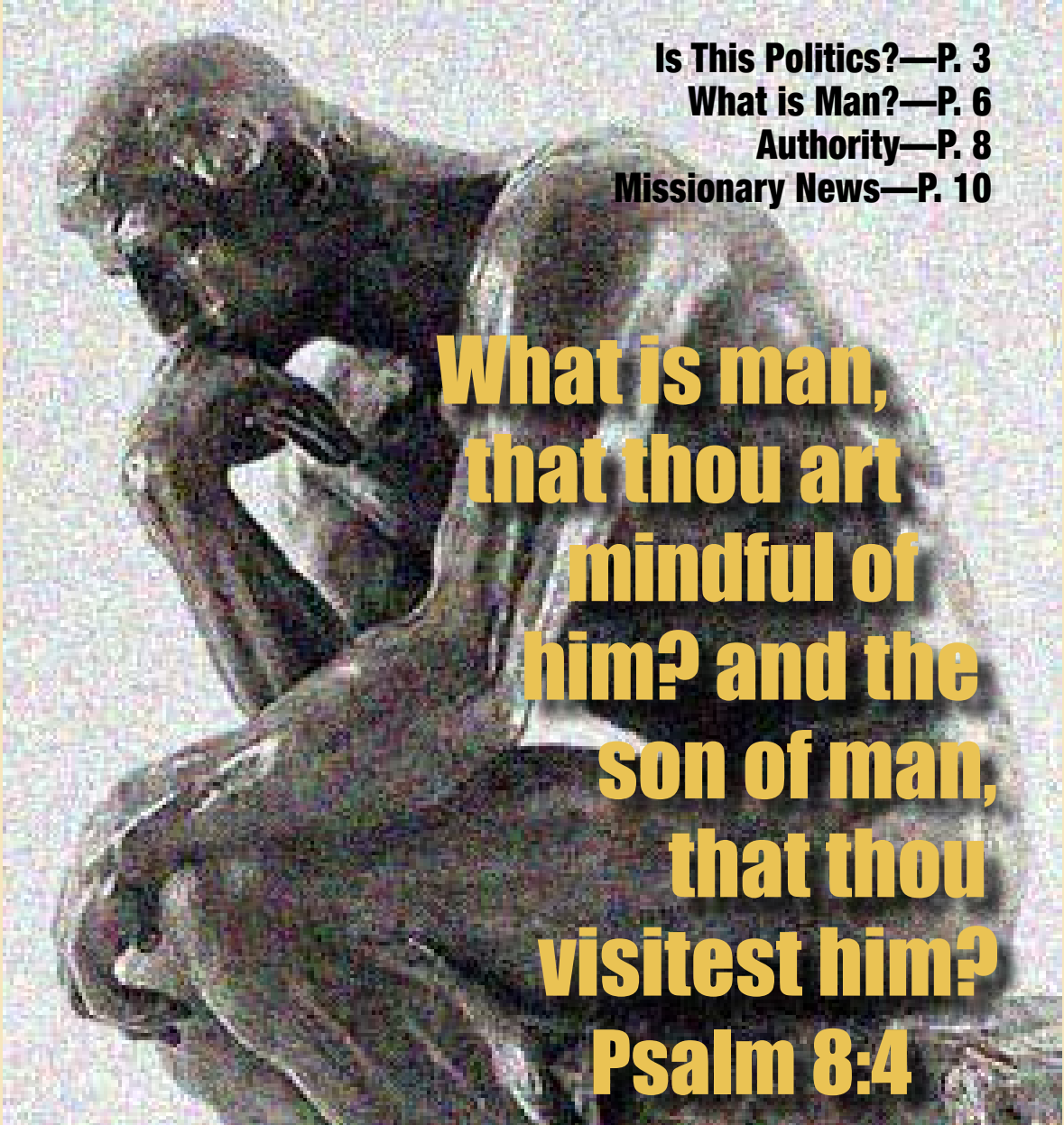
SHIELD OF FAITH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

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Prayer/News
UPDATE

Fulfilling the Great Commission Through Establishing New Testament Churches

Is This Politics?—P. 3
What is Man?—P. 6
Authority—P. 8
Missionary News—P. 10



**What is man,
that thou art
mindful of
him? and the
son of man,
that thou
visitest him?
Psalm 8:4**

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Editorial Notes

Our cover shows the very familiar image of Rodin's "The Thinker." Although it is often thought of as a humanist portrayal of man, another commentator notes: "The Thinker was originally meant to depict Dante in front of the Gates of Hell, pondering his great poem (In the final sculpture, a miniature of the statue sits atop the gates, pondering the hellish fate of those beneath him)."

Rather than ponder Dante's *Divine Comedy*, it would be far wiser to ponder the question posed by the inspired writer of Psalm 8:4: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Jim Lucas devotes his column to considering that very question. What is man? What is his nature, and how does it contrast and conflict with that of His Creator? What can man do? Why should God be mindful of man?

Dick York doesn't address that question directly, but his article "Is This Politics?"

meshes well with Jim's consideration of Psalm 8:4. There are many who are abandoning biblical principles in seeking to preserve the temporal world in which we live. Great civilizations have risen, prospered, declined, and eventually succumbed. What does the Bible tell the believer to do in times such as we face today? Dick's article is a good reminder to seek the Lord in these days.

Richard McDaniel contributes a teaching examining biblical "Authority." Though the world and its institutions seem to be crumbling at an accelerated rate as it races toward the culmination of time, we are reminded that the Lord Jesus Christ will return for His Church and all the plans of man or demon cannot stop the plan of God. The Lord Jesus Himself has promised that "... the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Let us therefore do as the Lord designed the Church to function.

May the Lord give us confidence that what He has promised, that He will also do. 🙏



Some scenes from Ivory Coast. (See Missionary News for more photos from Jerry Skiles.)



Is This Politics?



By Dick York

In spite of the fact that we recognize the world's problems to be spiritual and that only submission to the LORD will solve them, the comments we make concerning our times may sound political because, as apolitical as we may think we are or would try to be, the policies and direction of government are relevant in our discerning of the times. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because they could look at the sky and predict the weather, but they couldn't look around them and discern the times. What was it that they were supposed to observe to make them aware of the times?

Prophecy from the beginning has involved the rise and fall of nations. Early on, it involved the tower of Babel, an incident in history in which man sought to make a name for himself, to order his own ascent into the heavens, and to rule his own destiny on the earth. God frustrated that plan. Egypt was a political power that would have dominated God's people had He not delivered them. David later ruled over Israel as a king; that's a *political* position. And after him, political intrigue was a major barometer of Israel's *spiritual* condition. Their relationship to their God was reflected in the political power that ruled over them. The nation was blessed or punished by political powers. When the northern kingdom of Israel defected to serve other gods, Assyria took them captive. When Judah did the same, Babylon forced them into captivity. Subsequently, Babylon was punished by Persia, and then Persia by Greece, which in turn was conquered by Rome. These were all political powers that God used to accomplish His purpose in the world. Prophecy has been marked by the rise and fall of nations. The way that nations rise or fall is by political upheaval, which God controls. In observing the times, the consideration of government policies is unavoidable. To understand what is transpiring in the world, and particularly in our nation, is like looking at your watch to see what time it is; it is not the same as endeavoring through politics to change the course of events or fix the nation's

problems through politics.

In the beginning, Adam, being set over the works of God's hands, was God's government on the earth. Until the fall, it was *God's* kingdom; Adam, through his disobedience, surrendered that authority to Satan, who then became the god over a whole new system called "the world." Since then, within the parameters that God has set for him, Satan has exercised influence, if not control, in the course of human governments.

Daniel, while calling on the Lord for Israel's deliverance from captivity in Persia, received revelation from God concerning the future of this world until the end. It was world history in advance, a litany of the great political powers that would become a calendar of events, one power falling to another in order until finally the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.¹ The last of these powers before Christ rules appears to be global, socialistic and atheistic. It is antichrist, the ultimate in Satan's rule.²

Every one of the political powers that Daniel saw in his vision sought to dominate the world, and each of them opposed Jehovah. At Babel, Nimrod sought to establish his rule in opposition to God.³ In Egypt it was Pharaoh who caused Jacob's seed to worship other gods; in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar made them bow to the image he had made.⁴ The Persians worshiped the sun, the moon, and the god Mithras; the Greeks came next with their polytheistic worship. The Romans succeeded the Greeks, and their emperors proclaimed themselves gods and persecuted those whose God was Jehovah. The final world government will dismantle everything that is called God or that is worshipped and declare itself (himself) to be god.⁵

Even though America's beginnings resulted from rebellion, God allowed her to flourish as one of the major and most influential nations of history as she applied biblical principles to public policy and became the primary source of Christian mission to spread the gospel throughout the world

in a great end-times thrust. It was from her shores that the greatest missionary endeavor of modern times was launched. But in one generation, that great legacy was to be reversed, as we are now witnessing; and that great nation was to recede into socialistic oblivion to be replaced with the global rule of Antichrist.

Why, then, would it then seem ungodly to some, or overly political, in the light of what the Scriptures have said, to observe and comment on the fact that our present government is in the process of dismantling everything in our national policy that was based on Scripture and, until now, has allowed the blessing we have enjoyed and is endeavoring instead to lead this nation on a contrary path? That seems consistent with the conspiracy of nations prophesied in Psalm 2:1-3.

I decry the idea that there is a political solution to this nation's current plunge into oblivion. Far too many Christians are caught up in political action when they could better spend their energy praying for revival and a spirit of repentance in our land, preaching the gospel to the lost in order to rescue them from the coming judgment. As a once-free nation we are now over the edge, and no politician whether through compromise or courage is going to bring us back. Preachers of the Word have spent years tracing the course of prophecy for those who would listen, explaining the events of the last days and warning of the coming judgment.

Why is it so difficult to recognize the times? Why, in our minds, do some of us keep pushing the prophesied events farther back and relegating them to a continually receding future? The judgments have already begun to be visible in the land. To close our eyes to the signs of the times and to be purposely oblivious to where we are and to what time it is doesn't make sense. Many professing believers actually embrace socialism as a way to care for the poor, which they think the Bible endorses. The contradiction eludes them. Let me explain.

In 1620, when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, they established a socialist order by which their cultivated land was considered communal and all the participants were to benefit equally from its product. Some applied themselves with diligence while others contributed little effort; but all were rewarded equally. The result, obviously, was a disincentive

to work, and a proportionate decrease in productivity which resulted in increasing poverty even for the diligent. Growing discontent precipitated a change in the order of things. The land was then divided among the families, and each became responsible for the productivity of his own parcel. The result was that the diligent prospered according to their labor and the others, suffering for their indolence, were compelled to apply themselves or become impoverished. This was a biblical principle that encouraged diligence and raised the productivity, prosperity, and morale of the society. The Bible teaches that if any will not work neither should he eat.

In a biblical society, there is a strong work ethic. "Work" is not a dirty word but the foundation of accomplishment, productivity, prosperity, and contentment. The keys to order, stability

and blessing are work, rest and worship. Although there is probably no such thing as a truly Christian nation, the biblical principles that we were free to embrace and practice made the U.S. unique among the modern nations of the world. Seeds of destruction were present from the beginning, but the influence of Marxism, which began to blow in from Europe in the early 20th century with its destructive cohort Darwinism, took root to shape the policies of our governing parties and have come to fruition in our present decade.

In the 1930s, our government began to impose the concept of socialism. Also in the '30s Darwinism was imposed upon our education system. Together they have dismantled the work ethic of a majority of our people and, for many, have made the worship of the one true God a thing of little importance if not of scorn. Professing atheists are now as common as professing believers, and third-generation welfare recipients are almost as numerous as those who work to support them.

Is such an observation prompted from political bias? No, but from the warnings of Scripture and from a concern that the saints recognize the encroachment of an Antichrist spirit pervasive in our nation, which is homogenizing the people of the world. It is the spirit of Antichrist which has been foretold in scripture and precedes the coming of the king who will put down all rule and authority.⁶

Today we are watching the systematic, intentional dismantling of America, the

A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government.

implementing of a system that competes with and contradicts every precept of Scripture. Whereas the Word of God inveighs against debt, debt is what is sinking the ship. Through covetousness the people have been made dependent on socialistic government programs rather than upon God.⁷ Few are willing to relinquish their “entitlements,” even if not doing so should mean the destruction of the nation. Over 14 percent of the people of this once-prosperous nation are on food stamps, while the government continues to give billions of borrowed dollars in foreign aid to nations more wealthy than we. As our nation reels, a relentless final knock-out attack is being waged upon it by its own government that will relegate it to the status of a whimpering member of nations subservient to a global leader. How could it be otherwise? The Scriptures have stated it, and history is bringing it to pass.

In 1787, Alexander Tyler, history professor at the University of Edinburgh stated, “A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government. A democracy will exist up until the time that the voters discover that they can vote for themselves generous gifts from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority vote for the candidates that promise the most benefits, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse due to loose fiscal policy. This is always followed by a dictatorship.

“The average age of the world’s greatest civilizations from the beginning of history has been about two hundred years. During that time, those nations always progressed through the following sequence:

From bondage to spiritual faith;
From spiritual faith to great courage;
From great courage to liberty;
From liberty to abundance;
From abundance to complacency;
From complacency to apathy;
From apathy to dependence;
From dependence to bondage.”

The final world government will be competitive and contrary to the kingdom of God and will be destroyed at the coming of the Lord Jesus.⁸ We who trust the LORD have the Word of God to guide us through these times, with the assurance that “all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose.”⁹ We know what we are to do. “Thanks

be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”¹⁰

We also know what we are *not* to do. We are not to wrestle against flesh and blood with carnal weapons. We should not expect to change the course of things by any political strategy which, in the end, will be in vain.¹¹ “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”¹²

It seems apparent that God’s hand is upon this land, and He has set over us “the basest of men.”¹³ Since our only recourse is to God, it is time to call upon the LORD, and to take up “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”¹⁴ It is time to “be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we are to shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life.”¹⁵

It is time to speak up before the people that they might be alert, telling them about Jesus and the way of salvation. It’s time to speak up before the throne of God in fervent prayer, making intercession for the lost and for the saints as well. It is time to look alive—to wake up and realize what time it is. It is time to get ready and stay ready. Everything is shouting “IT’S TIME,” and that’s what we are trying to do! Is this politics?

Endnotes

- 1 Revelation 11:15
- 2 Revelation 13:7,8
- 3 Genesis 10:10; 11:9
- 4 Daniel 3:4-6
- 5 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4
- 6 1 Corinthians 15:24-28
- 7 2 Peter 2:1-3
- 8 Revelation 11:13-15
- 9 Romans 8:28
- 10 1 Corinthians 15:57,58
- 11 Psalm 2:1
- 12 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
- 13 Daniel 4:7
- 14 Ephesians 6:17
- 15 Philippians 2:15,16 



What Is Man?

By Jim Lucas

*What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
and the son of man, that thou visitest him?*

Psalms 8:4

Does the Creator know what man is? We may not, but He certainly knows. “Now when he (Jesus) was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”¹ Jesus knew the hardness of their hearts and was not at all impressed with those who “believed” when they saw the miracles. No faith was manifested; faith is believing what you cannot see. “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”² Those who saw the miracles soon forsook Him. So did they really believe? It was much like the majority of the children of Israel who saw many miracles and yet perished in the wilderness in unbelief.³ *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* When we look at God who is the Almighty, we see One who is perfect in everything, holy, infinite in love and mercy, righteous, who cannot lie or ever break his promises? When we look at mankind we see that all have been born in Adam and have taken on his sinful nature and are by nature the children of wrath.⁴ The contrast is so great that we are left with nothing in common. God is light; we dwell in darkness. He is humble and meek; we are proud and arrogant; God is love and does everything possible to bring peace; man is hateful and always at war and strife. Our Creator has a purpose and abides in faith and hope with great expectation—and with no hiccups! Man is vain in all his imaginations, has no hope beyond the grave, and is continually making one gross error after another. Our Lord God is eternal and always

enjoying abundant life. Mortal man is dead in his trespasses and sins, reaping the wages of sin and disobedience. It is no wonder that the beloved psalmist asked, “What is man that thou art mindful of him?”

In the beginning God said, “Let us make man in our image.” This would be the greatest miracle of all. We know that nothing is too hard for Him; but when I look at my own progress, it truly stretches my faith.

The depravity of man was manifested early on with Cain shedding the blood of his brother Abel. From then on wickedness continued and increased until the Lord said, “My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.”⁵

Has God failed in his Eternal Purpose for man? Has He made a mistake? Will He fulfill His earnest expectation? No problem—nothing is too hard for God! In fact, this is an important factor in His plan for man. Because man was created for the glory of God, in order for God to receive glory in these human vessels, He made sure that they could not claim any glory for themselves: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”⁶

If we read Genesis 6:8, it simply says, “but Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” Why? Why did Noah find grace in the eyes of

God? Because, as is stated in Romans: “they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”⁷ There you have it! They that are in the flesh cannot please God—not then, not now, not ever. We all *fall short* of the glory of God. Our Lord God made a way when there was no way.

Jesus is the way. If we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him, we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. “[For] ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”⁸ Our Lord God revealed His great compassion; now we can know His love and grace, even as despicable as we are. We can rejoice in the hope of His glory, in trusting Him to do what only He can do.

“God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”⁹

Our Lord is definitely rich in mercy. He reaches out to even the vilest sinner and saves him with His unconditional love, translating him from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God. But His grace doesn’t stop there; now in the ages to come we will see the *exceeding riches* of His grace, just as He showed it to Peter who said he would never deny him but that very night denied Him three times. Peter went on to

die as a martyr for our Lord.

King David, who had a heart after God, nevertheless sinned grievously. Like Paul, David knew in whom he had believed and was convinced that He was able to keep that which he had committed unto Him. We can press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God because in our weakness He is made strong. Beloved, God knows what is in man, and He didn’t choose us because He thought we were able; but “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” We will see the riches of His grace through His working all things for our good because we love God and are called according to His purpose.

The believer has abundant grace to overcome what looks like failure or setbacks because God is using those to etch His own lovely character into his soul. He may suffer loss of properties, monies, or family, but everything is gain because to be made like Him is worth more than anything in this world. Imagine the day when people will look at you and see bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind; and instead of the old troublemaker, they will see a peacemaker. Just remember, beloved: it’s not about you or me. It’s all about Him.

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”¹⁰

Endnotes

1 John 2: 23-25

2 Hebrews 11:1

3 Hebrews 3: 17-19

4 Ephesians 2:3


5 Genesis 6:3,5-7

6 Romans 5: 1,2

7 Romans 8: 5-8

8 Romans 8: 9-11

9 Ephesians 2:4-7

10 Hebrews 13:20,21 

Authority

By Richard McDaniel

“God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.”
(Psalm 62:11).

“For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”
(Romans 13:1)

God has ordained that throughout life and the social strata of mankind there is authority. In the family structure, children are subject to their parents, the wife to her husband, the husband to God. Young people are to respect and submit to their elders. In employment, servants (employees) are told to be subservient to their masters (employers). In government, we are subject unto our rulers. In the church, we are subject to the Lord Jesus. The ultimate obligation for all of us is that we are all subject to our Creator. If there is ever a conflict of wills, God’s authority takes precedence.

To enter into Christ and thereby the church, there is of necessity a surrender of one’s will to the authority of Jesus Christ. God has declared that Jesus is Lord and all power has been given to Him. He is the head of the body, and the duty of the body is to submit to the head. Our Lord is very explicit in emphasizing the priority of our following Himself—even to the denying of one’s own self, one’s possessions, and one’s family. Some folks are tempted to make priority lists in their minds such as: God first, ministry second, then family, etc. This is a list which has gotten a lot of well-intentioned men into trouble. The family usually suffers from the implementation of such a list. Another list goes like this: God first, then family, then ministry, etc. This list also presents a problem. Actually, it doesn’t matter how the list is ordered. Whenever we make lists like these, we are denying the Lord Jesus his authority to rule over us by creating our own conditions. His authority becomes subject to our agenda. The Lord doesn’t need our help. He is capable

of ruling every aspect of life without our setting the order of priorities and without him having to compromise one aspect in order to fulfill another. We should have one priority: to hear from and to submit to the Lord Jesus .

Just as Jesus has authority over the individual saints, His authority presides over the church. In the functioning of the church, the Lord has invested His authority within the gifts and ministries with which He has equipped us. The same power and authority that Jesus possessed during His ministry on earth resides in the church. Jesus spoke with authority, taught with authority, healed with authority; and He prayed with authority. In order for us to have the same kind of results and to see Christ at work in us, we must have His anointing. We are told to “wait on our ministering.” Ministry, as you know, is the word for “service.” So whatever the service is—teaching, exhorting, prophesying, giving counsel, showing mercy, etc.—the key to success is to wait upon God for His anointing.

To paraphrase Ezra 7:10, Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law, to do it, and to teach it. He didn’t just come into the assembly to teach. What was primary for him (and should be for us) is a preparation of heart. One of the biggest problems I see in fellowship meetings, regardless of where they are, is a lack of preparation. If we have nothing to offer it is perhaps because we haven’t gone to the well of living water. Oftentimes, the meeting becomes a mere discussion of the Word—a sort of “group teaching” that lacks anointing. If the vessel is not filled and overflowing there

will be nothing to spill over onto others, in which case we sometimes try to fill the gaps with our own contributions. The purpose of our assembling is always “to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.” That comes about through the diversity of the body and the anointing of the Lord upon every part. Without the anointing of the Lord, the ministry doesn’t have authority.

Another way in which God invests authority in the church is in the office of elder/bishop. I use these two words together because they both are used to describe the same office. “Elder” speaks of the man; “bishop” speaks of the job. The word bishop means “superintendent” or “overseer.” One who has the office of elder is a bishop in a local church. According to the scripture, this is God’s means of government for the church; therefore, His authority resides with the office. He hasn’t authorized any other means of government. God is a God of order, as evidenced by everything He does. In the church we are told to do all things “decently and in order.” Elders have a valuable role to play in God’s order within the church. They “take heed,” they “watch,” they “feed,” they “rule,” they willingly take the oversight (not for any financial benefit); they pray for the sick; and they lay hands on those being commissioned for ministry. Having a plurality of elders in every assembly provides a means of accountability in the body of Christ.

Sometime back in the past, Christians adopted the system of a one-man pastoral rule over the churches. They took what is defined by Scripture (Ephesians 4:7-12) as a ministry gift and turned it into an office that is used for supervision of the church in the stead of the office of elder. This is a misuse of authority. A more recent movement has come from a rejection of this system and a swing to the other side of the pendulum. In this movement, elders are considered merely examples and have no significant ruling authority. In many of these churches, elders are not acknowledged or recognized in the congregations. There is essentially

no need for their recognition as they don’t do anything anyway. Decisions are made by “the church,” which usually consists of a consensus of the brothers who meet together in a “brothers’ meeting.” Here, again, is a misuse of authority.

I want to encourage the saints that authority is a good thing. God doesn’t just give it out without any control over it. Those who have authority are those that are under authority. In the flesh, we have a natural aversion to authority. They who despise governments walk after the flesh. (2 Peter 2:10) As Christians, we are subject to the Lord God and to our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. God has left us His Word, which speaks with His authority. Let us take heed that we not seek to modify the Word or to adapt it to fit our perspective or “what is working for us.” I believe that many Christians challenge God’s authority this way. I believe that we also challenge God’s authority by not letting Him have complete access to our lives, our families, our possessions, our security. We need to prepare ourselves to be vessels through which God can pour out anointed ministry and to have respect for the anointing we see in others. If there are those in our assembly who are qualified according to Scripture to be elders, let us encourage them to voluntarily take this responsibility and then be supportive of them, knowing that God has ordained this to be for the overseeing of the church. 🙏

Evangelical church elders, circa 1880s



Missionary Reports



Ivory Coast, West Africa

Jerry and Cherry Skiles

Greetings;

Cherry and I are happy to be back in the USA. We do not take for granted the freedom to get in our car and travel for miles without encountering a roadblock with young men armed with automatic weapons. There is a lot of criticism about our nation, yet in all my travels I have not found a country within which I would rather live or feel more secure. May God continue to bless America, and may He keep us a land of people who have a God-given right to seek life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

My sister Sharon visited us, and she was able with



us to travel to the tribe. She was an encouragement to the villagers and to us. We took a couple of young village believers back to Ghana with us for some medical attention. Crossing the river at the border was a memorable experience for all.

The 1040i medical team has given a supply of

hand-propelled carts for the handicapped to be distributed. A young Fulani wife and mother received a cart. The terrain in the area is very rough, and by June the main frame on the cart was cracking. She and her son pedaled three miles to see me, but I was gone. They returned and made the trip a second time. This time, the cart broke about a half mile from our house. She was very thirsty by the time I got to her. We got the cart and the woman into



our pickup and, by God's grace, were able to get her cart repaired. She was so thankful. She said now she would be able to get water for her family again!

In July, His Vision Mission had a series of conferences in Ghana that we participated in. It was a blessing to join the Kangnies, Ed Enns, Skip Voetberg, Tim Spurling, Sam Stone, and a number of Ghanaian brothers as we shared with and encouraged the church in Ghana.



I returned to our home in the Loma tribe during the Accra conference to meet with a small team from



the 1040i mission. The team did more work on the school-house. The government recently sent two teachers back to the tribe.

The two indigenous teachers who had been teaching in the village went to another village, where there has never been a school. When I left, they had 40 students, and more were being added as the people in the bush heard of the opportunity. Both of the teachers are believers. Pray they would minister to both mind and spirit as they labor.

The villagers were not happy to see us leave. Our presence in the tribe adds to their security, as the rebels do not want their misdeeds made public. We explained that we will return occasionally to help and encourage with the labor and ministry.



I will be returning to the tribe in October and

would appreciate your prayers that my time will be an encouragement and that the Loma and Loron believers will grow in their Faith and Love for God and for one another.

Resting in His Love and Grace
Jerry and Cherry 🌍

Rogers, Arkansas **Jim and Fran Lucas**

You might say that we were in the middle of things; Kansas is mid-America, and Salina is mid-Kansas. The sun was bearing down on us something fierce the entire ten days we were there, with temperatures more than a 100 degrees. At one point, it was 116 degrees Fahrenheit! My sombrero from Mexico was a real treat. Due to the extremely hot weather, we didn't even take the tent. People will not come out in that kind of heat, so we went looking for the lost sheep door to door. No one doubted that we were serious and that we didn't want any to perish.

Every time we went out, we managed to find people who were ready to hear the Good News which is always a delight to share. Some, of course, do not want to listen and at times become belligerent; we



pray that they will still have another opportunity, for we were also once blind and miserable. It is amazing the effect that the Word of God has on people: in many cases, when you first start sharing, they are hard and disinterested; then they change and ask questions and admit that they need to be reading their Bible or going to a church.

During this outreach, we became much more aware of the significance of Jesus' teaching concerning those who receive the servants of the Lord.

He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple,

verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

(Matthew 10:40-42).

There were quite a few people who either offered or gave us water. They listened to the Word, though some were not ready to surrender their lives to Jesus at that point. Nevertheless, they did receive us; therefore our Lord will not give up on them easily.

One Mexican gentleman by the name of Sergio Guzman received Richard McDaniel and TJ Ball

into his home and was quite interested. T J then asked me to go back with him, and I did. Sergio had a few questions, but he understood everything very well; and was more than ready to surrender his life to Jesus our Lord. Sergio is now a new man in Christ Jesus!



It would be difficult to tell of all the different ones who are very close to salvation. One lady, by the name of Lori, whom Jack and Tracy visited, was very excited about their visit and wanted them to come back. They did and were able also to minister to her husband Pete. They invited Jack and Tracy out for breakfast, and they want to study the Word of God. Lori is especially close to surrendering her life to Christ Jesus.

Roger Cobb and I preached to a lady by the name of Michael; she listened very attentively; then she told us her story. She had been raised Catholic, but when she was sixteen, she became pregnant and was living on the street. She was converted at that time. She said that at one point she only had one dollar. She was in this Church, and she believed she was to give that dollar to the Lord Jesus, so she did. Later on, she



fell away from the Lord and had not yet been reconciled to Him because she didn't believe she was worthy. We explained that nobody is worthy unless they put their faith in the blood of Christ Jesus. She then repented of her sins and was baptized. She believes that because she gave that dollar to the


Lord Jesus, he continued to send people to her door to preach the Word of God to her.

Our Lord God truly is gracious and will always recompense much greater than we can ever deserve.

I want to thank all of you who have been praying and fasting with us. Please continue, because our Lord God is worthy of the reward of His suffering.

Lord willing, our next outreach will be in Thermopolis, Wyoming. We hope to set up the tent on the 18th of August our fasting will be the 19th--21st.

Be encouraged in Jesus our Lord,

Jim and Fran 

Valle De Juarez, Mexico Ed and Abby Drysdale

It's interesting how life throws certain curve balls your way when you least expect it. When I was in high school on the baseball team, I remember when the count was 0 and 2, with two strikes against the batter. The coach would say, "Be ready, be patient, be looking for that curve ball." To be honest, I hated the curve ball. I would much prefer the fast ball. But life has a way of serving us curve balls from time to time. The question is, what are you going to do with it?

When we came back from visiting family in Texas and Arkansas, we knew we that we had to confront a brother about living in relationship that wasn't what the Lord would have for him. Those things are very hard to do, and you feel torn but hope for the best outcome. Unfortunately, and to my dismay, the brother has dropped out of fellowship, has decided not to deal with this sin, and is looking the other way. Please pray for this brother; his name is Oscar and his partner is Gabby. They have a seven year old boy named Jaziel. Jaziel just came back from Kid's Camp, being very encouraged in the Lord. As matter of fact, he was singing along with his fellow peers on the way back from camp. It was a delight to hear them joyfully singing to the Lord. Pray that the Lord will convict Oscar of his sin and that he will stand up for what needs to be done. He is in a dangerous place right now. Pray for Gabby to yield herself to Christ and pledge her allegiance to Him only.

Since the evangelistic campaign that we had in April, things haven't gone the way I had expected and hoped for. One brother had told me before the Campaign that we might only see one family added to the church, but we could hope for the best. The main thing is that the message would be preached in every home. Well, we've had people come and go since then much like a revolving door. I don't get it! Maybe I never will. It's like they're trying on a new pair of shoes to see if they like them. Isaiah sums it up pretty well by saying, "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

It saddens me to inform you that Samuel and Rosario (who got saved about five months ago) haven't been attending for the past two months. They were faithfully


attending, but they have stopped because of the cares of the world. They are struggling financially, as he hasn't had any work. They decided to open their own business which has completely absorbed their time but shown little profit. Because of this, they decided to open their shoe business to a few people on Sunday to get more clients. The enemy is so clever, isn't he!?! It pains me to see, but they have swallowed that lie and are now neutralized by the enemy. They told me a few months back, right after the evangelistic campaign, they wanted to be more involved. But just recently, since sending their kids to the camp, they did show up one Sunday—as the service was ending. Please pray for them because their kids are on fire for the Lord and really like attending the meetings. I'm trusting that the Lord is going to use these kids to pull them back on the right track.

In the face of adversity, the Lord always knows how much you can bear. Today I'm excited to tell you that I had a chance to lead a young man to the Lord! His name is Salvador. He actually was fruit from the campaign that we had a few months back. One Friday night, out of the blue, he showed up with his girlfriend Miriam. He didn't say much that night but listened intently. A month passed without my seeing him, and then yesterday his girlfriend Miriam asked me if I would talk to Salvador because he really wanted to talk to me about some things he's dealing with. He came the next day. As we began to talk, I could see how the Lord had been using certain things to draw him to Himself. He had gone with Miriam to a Christian retreat on the coast and had been reading his Bible. He was ripe for the picking; the fruit was just ready to fall from the tree! That day, July 30, he asked Jesus to take His burdens and surrendered his will to Him. Pray for him as he takes the next step toward obeying the Lord in baptism. We will be starting a discipleship course with him and Miriam. I'm always amazed how the Lord works just when you think there isn't much hope and your wondering whether people are really listening. Then when you least expect it, the curve ball is thrown. It is then that the Lord says, "Don't despair for I am with you. Swing away!!! You can handle this curve ball."

Contact: Want to know more?

Call us anytime at (541) 728 5946. Yes, that is a U.S. number! Want more regular updates? Search for Abby Drysdale on Facebook. A first-class letter will get to us in about three to five weeks; so if you prefer pen and ink, here is our address:

Ed and Abby Drysdale
Apdo # 22, Calle Morelos 353
Valle de Juarez,, Jalisco 49540, Mexico

Praise the Lord!
Ed and Abby Drysdale 

Hungary Kaylene Ball

Hello Friends and Family!

It's been awhile! I hope this letter finds all of you enjoying and making the best of your summer. Sunday (the 3rd) I arrived back in the States after a 10-month interval in Hungary (with a brief visit home in April for my sister's wedding). School was finished the second week of June, and I used my remaining time there mostly for travel. I was able to see parts of Croatia, Austria, and England.

Two students leading us in the Gospel ABC's



Those 10 months I spent in Hungary were the most rewarding and joyful of my life. I just barely began to comprehend the great desire God has to save the lost and the desire He has to use people like me in that process. Two of my students became believers, and, through their testimonies, and the English/Bible classes, I've seen hearts soften considerably to the message I was there to share. There were also several salvation testimonies in the Bible studies and home church that I was involved in. A retired British couple who had re-located to Hungary fully surrendered their lives to the Lord, against all odds (humanly speaking), considering their age and opinionated views on life. Those views have been totally transformed as they have found new identity in Christ.

I'm really excited to be making plans to return to Hungary in the fall for, most likely, another year. There are just so many open doors and my work there seems incomplete! Rather than live in the village and spend



Me with a little second grader named Timi

SFMI Update

the majority of my time at the school, I will be moving to the neighboring city and will be having Bible studies as well as assisting in leading an English/Bible class in the university there. I plan to teach one class at the village school to any of the older students who are particularly interested in the subjects I'm there to teach (English and Bible). This is mostly in hopes of keeping my contacts there and furthering the work that the Lord has begun. I'm praying for opportunity to further disciple my two young friends who have given their lives to the Lord. But I'm particularly excited about this transfer of focus from young children to university age because (though I adore working with kids) I've felt stifled in some respects due to the language barrier. Most university students have a good understanding of at least conversational English. However! *I do* plan to work on learning the language, possibly by taking private lessons. I would appreciate prayer that the Lord would bless me with motivation and diligence in that area. I have great peace about pursuing these opportunities and am confident in the Lord's leading at this point in time.

My departure date is pending, and I would love for you to be in prayer with me about the details of that coming together—plane ticket, timing, etc...

God has provided in amazing ways for me, in order for me to live in Hungary solely as a volunteer. Many of you have been the instruments God used to answer very specific prayers. Thank you.

*With much love and thanks,
Kaylene 🌍*



Some of my students performing traditional Hungarian dance

The second grade class thanked their teachers with roses and kisses



Ghana Report Skip Voetberg

Greetings in the name of the Lord,

On June 17th I made a return trip to Ghana, West Africa, along with a young man named Samuel Stone, who is a friend of Jerry and Cherry Skiles. This was his first trip to a place like Africa, and he has a desire to seek the Lord in serving Him in such a way. After a rather long and eventful trip, we arrived safely in Accra.

It was good to see many of our old friends and brethren in the Lord. There is just a handful still meeting in Tarkwa, but they are joyful and continuing on in the Lord. We joined Tim Spurling, who arrived about a week before us, in our old Ghana hometown of Tarkwa. The reason for this trip was a response to an invitation from David Kangni to hold three conferences of four days each: the first to be in Tarkwa, then Accra, and lastly in the village of Kpetoe (Petoway). We were joined by Ed Enns, who traveled down from Burkina Faso, and Jerry Skiles, who has been working with the Loma people of north Ivory Coast.

The Lord gave me the opportunity to minister at these conferences on the subject of "What Is the Church?" "What is the Operation of the Church?" and "It's Purpose in this World." For all of us who shared the Word, there was a united emphasis of encouraging the Ghanaians to catch the vision of fulfilling the great commission and making disciples in their own country and the surrounding ones. Ed was able to show some data revealing areas of Ghana, Togo, Burkina Faso, and Ivory Coast, where there is no evidence of the gospel or a true group of believers. A good portion of Ghana is drowning in a sea of "Christian Religion" that has no real biblical sense of direction in the Lord. Most of these congregations are along the coast, where the money is! The few true believers who are sprinkled throughout Ghana are subjected to a corrupt form of Christianity that holds them in bondage to the law and the giving of tithes and offerings, not to mention the many cultural traditions or beliefs that add to their bondage.

At the last conference held in Kpetoe, we had a wonderful Sunday meeting during which we heard testimonies of some who came to saving faith and after the meeting there were five baptisms! If the Lord brings the saints of Ghana to your minds, please pray for them, that the Lord would bring them to maturity of faith, and of a greater revelation of Him. Also, our family would appreciate your prayers as we consider the future and our involvement with the work in Ghana.

In Christ
Skip Voetberg 

India

Samuel Singh.

My dear loving brother and sisters from Shield of Faith. Greetings to you, your family and your church fellowship in Jesus name.

I Praise God and thank God that today is 15th August 2011 and our country is celebrating INDEPENDENCE DAY. Our Good God has given this country 64 years independence. Hallelujah!

Now I am sending you Hardeeps Bible college report. Hardeep is doing very good and I had a talk to the college principal and He told me that Hardeep is the best student in this college and He is leader in the class as well in charge of Library. Now they are giving practicals training so they are going to villages to villages and telling about Lord Jesus Christ and giving testimony to the villagers. I praise God and thank God for Hardeep's life. Hallelujah.

Hardeep sent me some IMPORTANT EMERGENCY NUMBER FROM THE BIBLE and now I am sending you to you.

ENQUIRY Jeremiah 33:3- WATER SERVICE John 4:14- BULLDOZER Jeremiah 1:10
SECURITY Isaiah 52:12,- FIRE STATION Isaiah 43:2,- POLICE STATION Isaiah 41:i
CHIEF JUDGE Psalms 50:3-4.


THEN: FAST FOOD John 6:35,- CLINIC 1st John 1:7 ,-TRANSPORT Ex 33:14-, HOSPITAL Isaiah 53:5,- THEN ORPHANAGE PS 146:7, PS 146:9,

With this report you will know that Hardeep is doing good. Hallelujah.

We have next baptism on the 18th September 2011, and then I will send you the baptism report with the photographs.

Monsoon is still going on and lots of problem with the people, so we need your prayers. Greetings from my family and from our churches in India.

We love you, God Bless,

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Samuel Singh 



Has God Lost His Remote Control?

By Dun Gordy

Did you ever lose your remote control? Dumb question. Everyone has lost their remote at one time or another. God even lost His.

Have you ever wondered at the enormous amount of radio signals that are passing through the room you are sitting in? Must be thousands of them. We can't see them or hear them unless we have the proper receiver and it is tuned to the right frequency (Here's a good place to preach a sermon on I Corinthians 2:14—but I'll let you cogitate on that).

I have several remote controls in my house. There's a gadget to turn on and off the TV and another for the cable box. I have a gizmo to control the outside lights and another for the window air conditioner. It is puzzling to this NON-teck redneck how the things even work in the first place, much less keep straight which one is supposed to do what. Push a button in one room and the door locks on my pickup truck responds out in the driveway. Now, if man can figure out how to do that, what hinders our Sovereign God from having one installed in every fetus?

And that got me to wishing that our Lord would just put me on remote control? Push one button and I'd pray. Push another, and I'd witness. Or a "mute" button would be great. It might keep me out of a lot of problems I get myself into. Or with a "change channel" button, HE could keep my mind clean and my thoughts on Him. He could even have one that would override my temptations to sin if He wanted to. Or at least a shock collar like those used to train dogs. Just a little jolt to warn me when I'm about to mess up.

If I were Him, I'd make sure that everyone had a "tithe" button.

Might be nice

if I were a strict predestination advocate. It sure would save me and God a lot of work if I did not have to worry about walking by faith and making tough decisions. Or trying to obey any of those "take heed" warnings that are sprinkled through the Bible. I wouldn't even have to "seek those things which are above," wouldn't have to "forsake" or "put on" or... well, I better quit before I get some of my holy robot brethren upset.

I just have to admit that if God has a remote control for my Christian walk, He's either lost it or chooses not to use it. But bless His name! He neither made me a robotic responder, nor did He leave me without comfort or help. He has come Himself to dwell within my very body in the Person of His Holy Spirit.

And if you think remote controls are amazing, just imagine that when "thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it..." (Isaiah 30:21). It is the voice; it is the very personal whisper of the Almighty, the God of the universe. And He will direct me and guide me, empower me and even control me to obey Him and do His will—if I will just let Him! 🙏



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2011 SFMI Labor Day Conference at Cusick, Washington

As you read this newsletter, the Labor Day Conference at Cusick, Washington (September 2-5) is probably just days away. It is not too late to register and attend this conference. Go to www.sfmia.org and download the registration form and the liability release (required for all conferees). Then call Brian Martell to inform him you plan to be there.

The weekend will be filled with ministry, music, and fellowship. It is family friendly and is always encouraging and challenging for the attendees. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Please Note: The Update is sent free upon request to all wishing to receive it. The cost of \$9 per year per subscriber for this Update is covered by the freewill offerings of God's people. The Update is also available by email. Please send your request to sfmi@sfmia.org.

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